

## SELECTIONS FROM THE MAIL

CONCERNING ELEAZER WILLIAMS.  
EVIDENCE TENDING TO SHOW THAT HE WAS THE  
TRUE LOUIS XVII OF FRANCE.

To the Editor of The Tribune.  
Sir: Permit me in the interest of historical accuracy to correct certain erroneous statements contained in "The Nation" of May 31, 1894, in a review of my book, "The Story of Louis XVII of France."

The writer of that article asserts that the three Pretenders, who were in London at the same time in 1803, "lived in jail, as many thought he ought to have done." Those men did not die in jail, however, always insignificant, retired to former obscurity. Richemont died as protégé of a wealthy countess in France, and his grave was marked by the Dauphin's name until the inscription was erased in 1885 by order of the French Government; Naundorff died in Deut, and his tombstone bears the name and titles of Louis XVII, King of France and Navarre.

Again, it is asserted that nearly all of my "evidence of Williams's royal relationship is traceable to the testimony of Williams himself," and as specimens are mentioned the affidavit of Mrs. Williams that Bleuher was adopted, the statement that money was sent from France for his support, and the New-Orleans declaration that Bleuher brought him to America. The truth is that not one of these belongs to Eleazer Williams's testimony. The affidavit was copied from a legal record by Mr. Hanson; the fact that money came from France, besides being long an open secret, was publicly mentioned in "The Albany Morning Express" of October 19, 1853, and the New-Orleans story, which first came to Mr. Williams's knowledge in 1848, was correctly stated under oath by Mrs. Brown in 1853, her existence being previously unknown to Mr. Williams, and the information coming, not through him, but in consequence of a message sent to the Rev. Dr. Hawks.

Again, Eleazer Williams is said to have once declared in writing that he was born in 1792 (the Dauphin was born in 1755), and the reviewer is inclined to believe that statement on account of "certain collateral proofs." There are proofs enough if it could not be true. He first appeared in Paris in 1795 as a boy about ten years old. In the affidavit of John O'Brien, an educated half-breed Indian, who was present when the stranger was brought to Thomas Williams, he is described as a boy between ten and twelve years old. If he had been born in 1792 he could have been only eight years old when taken to school in 1803; only ten when "converted" in 1802 only thirteen when sent alone to Canada for his health in 1805, only fourteen when introduced to Boston clergyman in 1806 as a young man studying for the ministry; all of which is absurd.

Again, the reviewer quotes my argument that Naundorff's ignorance of French is a proof that he was an impostor as applying with equal force to Williams. But the cases are entirely different. Naundorff declared that he never lost his mind and that until within a few months of his arrival in Berlin he was always with French-speaking people; but Eleazer Williams was almost idiotic when left with the Indians and naturally forgot what little he retained of his native tongue. O'Brien testified that the boy spoke French on his arrival.

Again, the reviewer asserts that Prince de Joinville did not stay one night at Green Bay, but "after dinner" pursued his journey on horseback. Williams's journal has an entry for October 13, and the language implies that the steamer reached Green Bay during the afternoon of that day. The interview with the Prince took place that evening "about 10 o'clock." The next entry is October 13, and states that the Prince left Green Bay the day before (October 20) "at 12 o'clock."

With regard to Mr. Williams's personal appearance, which the reviewer declares to have been more than of an Indian than of a white man, there is the opposing testimony of a white man, those cited by Mr. Hanson, some of whom identified him thoroughly and declared in written reports that there was no trace of the Indian about him. As a boy his complexion was dark, and his skin should not be harsh or sanguineous, exposed to the open air was to be expected.

The ears, assertedly to a family party of the Bostonians, and whose names I do not know, except that of Louis XVIII. Also, the scars on his wrists, elbows and knees answered to the Dauphin's physical condition in the Temple. It is asserted that he was a boy of 12, and that he acquired through his long residence among the savages Indians "boi-in," not because their feet are abnormal, but because they wish to protect their feet from injury when walking on narrow trails through the forest.

The reviewer is correct in supposing that I was not aware of the existence of material in the literature of the West Indies, but I did not know of any reliable source of information, and I have since learned that the knowledge thus obtained was scanty, there was nothing in it to shake my faith in Mr. Hanson's estimate of Williams's character.

Naundorff asserted his feelings as to the propriety of his accepting an office in the church, which he had secured through his long residence among the savages Indians "boi-in," not because their feet are abnormal, but because they wish to protect their feet from injury when walking on narrow trails through the forest.

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